

Do You Have the Faith to Teach Others?

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Introduction: How did the gospel spread in the 1st century?

A. God had a plan that was implemented through the apostles.

(Mk 16:15-16; Mt 28:19-20)

1. How could a group of Galilean fishermen accomplish this?
2. They understood that “go ye means go me!”

B. Where do we fit in this work? (Acts 5:42)

1. The early Christians used their homes to powerfully teach individuals.
2. How many of you have ever been in a home study?
3. If you had to suddenly move and completely start over, would you have time to tell others about the Lord? (Acts 8:3-4)
 - a. There is a reason why these Christians could do this! The gospel was a part of them – if you came to know them you would hear the gospel!
 - b. How many of you see this work as yours? Some hear lessons like this as I would listen to teaching on cooking or home decorating.
4. Have you built a biblical faith in your life?

I. We must be committed to building a strong foundation for our own faith.

A. **The issue is not just how much knowledge and experience I possess.**

1. Where does successful teaching come? It comes from a heart of faith.
2. Many have great knowledge, but that does not assure one that he will have a strong faith! (1 Cor 8:1-2)

B. **Consider two examples during the ministry of Christ.**

1. Would you have sent a previously maddened, demon possessed man back to the people to teach having almost no knowledge? (Mk 5:17-20; Lk 8:40)
2. What made this man successful? How many of you **have greater knowledge** than this man?
3. (John 4:25-30) – Again, would you use this woman in evangelism?
4. In both of these cases these people served to open doors for further teaching by someone more capable. There is not a Christian among us who cannot be as effective as these if we would have the same measure of faith!

C. **The resurrection of Christ was the foundation of evangelism for the 1st century church.**

1. They heard the evidence and were changed! (Acts 2:32; 3:14-15; 13:27-31)
2. This was not just a social event where people followed what they had always seen! Genuine faith is never a blind faith. (Heb 11:1)
3. The resurrection of and thus the judgment of all men is assured. (Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor 4:13-14)
4. We too are “raised” because of our faith in the resurrection. (Col 2:12-13)
5. Could you teach someone who is not sure the Bible is from God the evidence that Jesus is the son of God? (1 Pt 3:15)

D. **We must have a clear understanding of the grace of God.**

1. What ultimately are we teaching? We want others **to trust in God**.
2. It is the love of God that brings men to God. (**Psa 36:7; 1 Pt 2:1-3; 1 Jn 4:19**)
3. More specifically we must center on the cross of Christ. (**Gal 6:14; Phil 3:7-9**)
4. Again, we must have a clear view of where we stand before God or we will present a false view of the Christian life! (**1 John 4:17-19**)

II. We need to change how we see this world.

A. We will respond when we clearly see the need. (Heb 11:24-27)

1. What if we lived in Samaria at the time of the Syrian siege? (**2 Kgs 6:24-25**)
 - a. Have you ever really been hungry?
 - b. If you could feed the starving, would you?
2. In despair four leprous men find an empty camp! (**2 Kgs 7:4-5**)
 - a. Can you imagine a camp filled with provisions for over 200,000 men? (**2 Kgs 7:8**)
 - b. After risking your life for food, what would you now do?
3. Even the lepers knew what any decent person would do. (**2 Kgs 7:9**)
 - a. Do we have this same decency?
 - b. We do not have to guess, we face a greater famine and we have the provisions. What is the greatest need of all men today? (**Rom 1:16-18**)

B. We must believe that there is a hell.

1. When was the last time you seriously considered the Bible teaching on Hell? (**Rom 1:16-18; Mark 9:42-48; 2 Cor 5:10-11**)
2. If we really believe this, what will be in our hearts when we see those whom we love? (**James 2:14-17**)
3. We need a sense of urgency! Listen to the concerns of our Lord. (**Jn 4:34-38**)

III. We need real leadership in evangelism

A. What are our “business meetings” like? What are we really committed to? (Mt 6:22-24**)**

1. It means that you will purse it.
2. It means that you will build associates based on that commitment.
3. It means that your greatest joy will come from successes in this cause. (**Luke 15:4-7**)
4. The church is filled with committed people. But *what* are they committed to?

B. What would someone do if he wanted to learn to play golf or to fish?

1. Real leadership will provide training! (**2 Tim 2:2**)
2. The best training is done in the home and in actual studies. (Ex. My training, Navy training)
3. What is your real motive in hearing these lessons?

Conclusion: Let your first fruit in evangelism be your own soul. (**Rev 3:19-20**)

- A. How many need to rediscover the joy of their salvation? (**Psa 51:10-13**)
- B. This is the greatest work we can be a part of. Are you ready to pursue it?

Two Churches Want To Grow
Bill Hall

Two churches want to grow, but their attitudes toward growth differ greatly.

The first church looks upon growth as its primary purpose. Goals are placed before the membership: "We want to double our membership within the next three years," for instance. Success (or failure) is judged almost entirely on the basis of that congregation's numerical growth.

The second church looks upon the saving of souls as its primary purpose, and any growth in membership is just a natural result of that primary purpose. Members of the second church are infused with the value of immortal souls rather than with a sense of congregational pride.

Members of the first church become eager to get people to the water. Baptism is the point at which people are added to the membership list; consequently, it's going to take so many baptisms to keep pace with their great goal of doubling their membership. They must not only get them to the water, they must get them there within the time period that has been arbitrarily set by their leaders.

Members of the second church are far more eager to get people to repent. Their concern is for additions to the Lord's body rather than additions to a membership list. Their approach is to bring sinners to a consciousness of their sin and the consequences of remaining in sin. If they can do this in one study, great! But if considerable time is required to uproot false concepts and to plant the true seed of the gospel, they patiently accept this. Their only sense of urgency grows out of the uncertainty of life and its duration. But they know that shortcuts are not the answer; that baptism without repentance is worthless; and that once people are brought to true repentance, having been properly taught, baptism for the remission of sins will follow. So they wait with longsuffering until the gospel brings about its desired effect in the hearts of those whom they are teaching.

Members of the first church will be tempted to use questionable tactics in their approach to people. The old methods and approaches don't seem to be effective anymore. New and more positive approaches must be found. So the members of the first church make their appeal to the pride of people. They persuade them of their self-worth; they build their self-image; they tell them how valuable they would be to the congregation. "We need you," they tell their prospects. They might extol the virtues of the congregation, persuade their prospects of the value of being a part of such a vibrant, growing group of people. So, people "become members," and they conform to the rules that are placed before them for acceptance within the group, but there may have been little grief over sin; in fact, they might even still believe they were Christians before they "became members. "

The members of the second church recognize that the gospel never makes its appeal to the pride of people. They bring people to see their spiritual bankruptcy; that they have "nothing to pay"; that their true worth is not to be found in self, but in Christ; that they must humble themselves and look to Christ for their exaltation; that they are sinners in desperate need of salvation; that their only hope is to be found in Christ.

The first church may become compromising in its teaching. Its elders intend to maintain doctrinal soundness, but there is the pressure to produce, to maintain **the growth** rate set before the congregation. When doctrinal soundness becomes an obstacle to that purpose, the elders may succumb to the pressures and ease up on its teaching. The second church faces no such pressure, for in its concern for the spiritual well-being of people, there is desire for truth on every subject vital to salvation.

The emphasis of the first church is organizational and institutional; the emphasis of the second church is spiritual and heavenly.

We commend the second church to our readers. Serious problems can result when churches see growth as their primary purpose. If goals are to be set-and goals can serve a good purpose-let them focus on the numbers to be taught rather than the number to be baptized. If new approaches are needed, let them be conceived only if they are compatible with God's wisdom. In efforts to reach others, let all determine to know nothing "except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." When churches thus become really serious about saving souls, God will give the increase, and growth will take care of itself.